

Howard County Consumer Affairs Advisory Board Meeting Minutes for August 12, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm the President

- Present: Richard Green, Katherine Bronstein, Ashlyn Hood, Jill Bussey
- Absent: Jerome Jackson, Sue Rogan, Felicia West

Minutes of the July1, 2015 meeting were approved as read.

Administrator's Report

Becky provided the Board with OCA's Annual Report and Results Based Accountability (RBA) for FY2015, along with information collected through OCA's Customer Satisfaction Survey and Consumer Information Survey. The Board briefly discussed the reports and survey. Becky suggested that the Board take some time to review the documents more thoroughly and bring comments and questions to the next meeting.

Becky also provided the Board with OCA's fy16 strategic plan which focuses on education and outreach. Becky invited the Board to provide suggestions for additional individuals and groups with whom OCA can partner and/or contacts for organizations already identified.

Discussion of Advisory Board Project – Student Loans

The Board continued its discussion of a National Consumer Protection Week event on the topic of student loans. The group reviewed the outline of the purpose/objectives of the event and event prep schedule drafted by Sue. Board members agreed that this outline provides a great starting point for developing the event, but that further work is needed on refining the scope of the event.

The group discussed focusing the topic on how potential students can figure out how much college will cost at various types of institutions (public universities, community colleges, private colleges and for-profit schools), the various funding options, the differences between federal and private loans (including servicing problems, repayment and deferment issues) and how to avoid "scams." Additional work is needed to narrow scope into a topic that can be covered in no more than 2 hours, and won't duplicate information already provided by Howard County schools and Howard Community College.

Becky reported that Felicia (who wasn't there) is attempting to talk with someone at the HCPSS to get a handle on what info kids are getting in school. Katherine will also find out more about the course that HCC offers on this topic. Jill suggested that more local experts be recruited for the panel.

Since the Board will not meet again until October 7, members agreed to convene a work session on the event in the interim. Richard will poll the members to find a date that works best and Jill will set up a GoogleDocs for the Board to use to share information.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE BOARD WILL BE HELD AT 7 PM ON OCTOBER 7, 2015
OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS CONFERENCE ROOM
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